

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CONGREGATION OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
A RECONCILING IN CHRIST CONGREGATION



December Newsletter

2015

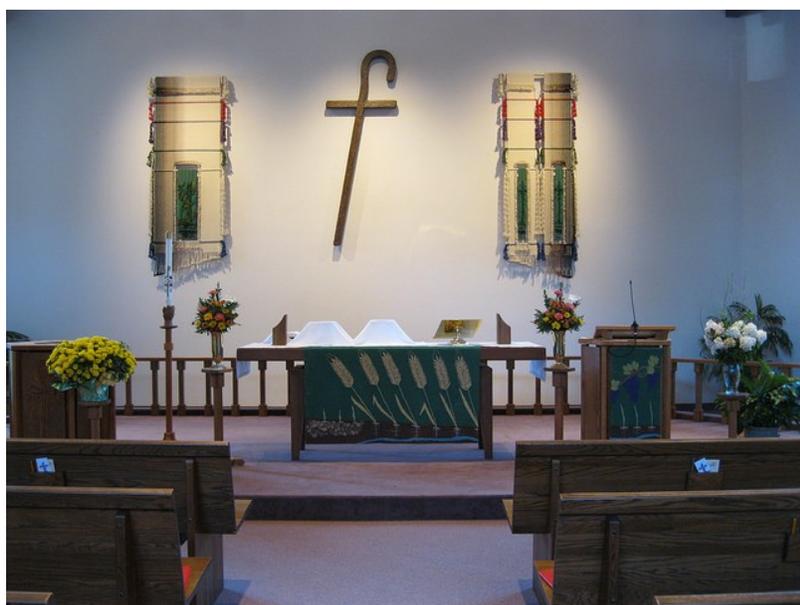
...We are God's People and the Sheep of God's Pasture... Psalm 100:3

We are a congregation empowered by the Good Shepherd to:

Nurture and Support His flock through Christ-centered worship.

Welcome All, offering trust and respect while sharing God's unconditional love.

Reach Out to the broader community through service and responsible stewardship of all God's creation.



In This Issue

- From the Pastor pg.2
- Council Minutes pg. 3
- Stewardship pg.4
- President's Message pg.5
- Sub-committee News pg.6
- Treasurer's Report pg.7
- Education pg. 8
- Worship Announcements pg.9
- Ministry Schedule pg.10
- GS Announcements pg. 11
- Social Justice pg.12
- Community Events pg.13
- WELCA pg.13
- Music pg.14
- Dec. Ministry Team pg.15

Contact Information

Church Office: 563-382-3963
Address: 701 Iowa Ave. Decorah, IA 52101
Email: decorahgoodshepherd@gmail.com
Church Office Hours: 8-12 noon M-F
Pastor Amy Larson
Cell: 563-379-5098
Email: amyzlaron@gmail.com
Pastor Amy's Office Hours:
M/T/Th: 10am-12 noon, W: 10:45am-12:45pm

Worship Schedule

(Holy Communion with every worship service)
Wednesday: 5:30 p.m.; Supper 6:15 p.m.
Sunday: 9:30 a.m.; Fellowship 10:30 a.m.

September-May:

Sunday School/Adult Forum: 10:45 a.m./10:50 a.m.

Check out our website!

1 <http://www.goodshepherddecorah.org>



FROM THE PASTOR

Beloved of God,

This is a time of year full of longing. We yearn for joy, peace, warmth, light connection. We hope for beautiful music, delicious smells, happy family gatherings and festive celebrations. We long for a world in which everyone has enough to eat, everyone has a warm home and peace prevails.

What do you do with those longings? They can be a bit overwhelming, so often, we work to make them go away. Some choose to dismiss all of our wanting this time of year with a “bah humbug” attitude about the season; others insist that we must stay focused on the true meaning of Jesus’ birth. Many voices tell us we can just satisfy all our longings by buying or doing the right things. Everywhere we turn this time of year we get the message that we can create the perfect Christmas through the right products, traditions, observances, strategies and service projects.

The season of Advent offers us a different way of being with longing. It gives us the opportunity to pay attention to, pray with, and draw upon our yearnings for joy, peace, warmth, light and connection. Rather than rushing to satisfy or dismiss our longings, we’re invited to stay with them and bring them to God. We’re invited to join people around the world and across the centuries in hoping for more joy and peace in our lives and in our world.

Advent gives us glimpses of God’s promised future to awaken our hunger and thirst for it. It calls us to yearn and prepare for Christ to come again to bring about this future. It gives us a fuller picture of what God did in sending Jesus to be born and live among us as Emmanuel, “God with us.” It helps us long for Jesus to be born again within each of us so that we might bear God’s light and love in our lives.

Our mission statement at Good Shepherd says that we: **“Nurture and support Christ’s flock through Christ centered worship.”** In the season of Advent, we are nurtured and supported as our own longings in this season are brought to the One who is making all things new in Christ. This happens in scriptures, prayers and hymns that are full of yearning and hope. It happens as we’re called to repent of all the ways we try to satisfy our wants in selfish, prideful ways. It happens as we anticipate and prepare to celebrate Christ’s birth again among us. It happens as we’re sent out to work for God’s promised future.

May your Advent be full of hope. May your Christmas be full of joy. I thank God for the opportunity to be on this journey with you.

In Christ,

“May you know what you long for.

*May you meet the One who lives
within your longing.*

May your desire draw you home.”

Jan Richardson

*O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile
here until the Son of God appear.*

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel

shall come to you, O Israel.

Please feel free to contact me
with prayer requests or to
request pastoral care.

Cell: 563-379-5098

Email: amyzlaron@gmail.com

CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEETING

November 17, 2015, 7 p.m. MINUTES

Present: Pastor Amy Larson, President Jim Fritz, Vice-President Kate Narveson, Treasurer Clara Knudson, Secretary Jeri Laursen, John Jefferson, Megan Buckingham (for Krista Holland), Drew Duffy, Jonathon Struve. Absent: Matt Tapscott

Fritz called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. John Jefferson offered devotions on Hebrew 10: 23-25.

Duffy moved, Struve seconded to approve the October Council minutes; approved.

Jefferson moved, Narveson seconded to adopt the November agenda; approved.

Education: Megan Buckingham

Sunday School has been exciting this fall. We have a larger number of children. Christmas program practice will start in a couple weeks. The program will be Sunday, December 20, 5:00 p.m. The committee is looking ahead to January program. There will be more music and activities around Bible stories.

Pastor Amy reported about the Advent Prayer calendar put together by the adult education committee. Each day will have one word and a scripture reference. Members will be asked to look for that word in their daily life. The "word" will be tied into the worship services.

Evangelism: Pastor Amy

The committee and members of the communications sub-committee are working on a Good Shepherd information sheet for guests and prospective members. It will give general information about Good Shepherd and will direct people to the website. Erik Berg has some ideas for displaying this sheet. Two new members (Kate Blair and Kristin Swanson) will be joining this Sunday. The committee is giving birthday cards to the children of the congregation and are sending cards to adults who are home bound or in retirement homes.

Property and Management: Drew Duffy

The roof inspection has taken place and the warranty has been approved; a light has been put up in the closet next to the kitchen; kitchen cabinets have been fixed; dirt (donated by Jim Fritz) and drain tile has been placed outside the music room; bungee cords have been put on the garbage cans (raccoons!); landscape clean up has been done. The committee has met with Cheryl Ruiz to complete the proper paperwork for employment. Pr. Amy had sent an email prior to the council meeting about a change of Administrative Assistant. Erika didn't work out so the committee proposed that we buy out Jenny Werner's contract with ManPower and hire her independently. The finder's fee is \$2080. Duffy moved, Laursen seconded to approve paying the finder's fee and hiring Jenny. Passed with eager endorsement.

Stewardship: John Jefferson

Jefferson went over the Proposal for Changes in the Ministry Teams draft. After much discussion, questions and clarifications it was decided that the council was supportive of the exploration for the process. It was suggested by Fritz that they present a brief announcement of this possible change at one of the Adult Forum meetings in January (January 10 or 17). The council thanked the Stewardship Committee for their work on this project. It will be presented at the annual meeting on January 24.

Worship and Music: Jonathon Struve

The committee is recommending a salaried staff Music Director position for Brooke Joyce. This would include 2 weeks paid vacation. The committee voted to support this. The Council did not take a vote at this time but they approve the proposal. This will be taken into consideration when the 2016 budget is discussed. Brooke will be gone the first three Sundays in January.

Advent: The Christmas tree will be put up on December 6 (no decorations), lights will be put on for December 13 and will be decorated for December 20. The children's program will be December 20, 5:00. The Christmas Eve service is at 4:30 and Christmas Day service is at 9:30. Communion will be served at both services. There will be no Wednesday services on December 23 and 30. December 27 will be a service of communion, lessons and hymns. Simon Hanson will lead the January 3 service.

This coming Sunday, November 22 will celebrate the 57th birthday of our congregation. In-town charter members have been invited to the service.

Pastor's Report: Pr. Amy

Pr. Amy is in need of 3-4 more adult mentors for her Confirmation kids. Makayla Marinack (a Luther student) has asked to become a job shadow intern with Pr. Amy in January. She would attend any meetings, participate in the Confirmation sessions, help with Sunday School, preach one Sunday, do a Children's sermon, etc. Pr. Amy will discuss confidentiality with her prior to the internship. There will be no financial cost to the congregation to have Makayla as an intern. Narveson moved, Jonathon seconded to approve; passed.

President's Report: Jim Fritz

Nominations are needed from committees. Sharon Randack has agreed to be on the Evangelism Committee; Drew Duffy has agreed to be Vice President; John Moeller has agreed to Treasurer. Committees should let Jim Fritz know by December 1 who they recommend for the replacement of the outgoing member.

2016: Council will meet January 19. The annual meeting will be January 24.

The bill for the reroofing and water heaters has been paid. The \$8000 loan from an anonymous member has been deposited. Fritz encouraged the congregation to support the process of repaying that loan and offered a thank you to the giver(s).

Wanda Deifelt sent an email to the council prior to the meeting asking about the possibility to support the Institute for Ecumenical Research in memory of Pr. Mau. Narveson moved, Duffy seconded to split our Christmas offering between the Institute and the CAN (Certified Nursing Training) program. Motion passed.

No Vice President or Secretary report.

Treasurer's Report: Clara Knudson

As of the end of October, the available fund for operating expenses in the checking account was \$4,956.75. This is low because the bill for the roofing has been paid and the \$8,000 loan had not yet been deposited. The cost of the roof was \$25,422. This was paid by the following: \$7000 memorial undesignated (line 108z); \$1000 equipment reserve (line 118); \$8000 loan; and \$9422 general fund. The water heaters project was \$3,474 so the total for the two projects was \$28,896.

The total cost of the LED lighting project was \$14,724.75. This bill has been paid as follows: \$4,625.00 from general donations; \$5,100 from Hasvold Memorial Fund; \$2,000 from a Deport Outlet grant; \$2,282.00 from an Alliant rebate and \$717.75 from our General Fund. There is a pledge of \$500.00 from WELCA for the LED project which will be coming in. After we receive this pledge the actual cost from our budget will be \$217.75.

Wednesday meals reimbursement for September and October were taken from Worship Committee (line 424). The balance is \$235 after expenses. A \$60 limit on reimbursement was set. Laursen moved, Jonathon seconded acceptance of the Treasurer's report. Approved.

Pr. Amy closed the council meeting with prayer. Adjournment 9:05 p.m.

Next Council meeting is December 15.

Respectfully submitted, Jeri Laursen, Secretary

STEWARDSHIP

GOD'S GIFTS TO US - OUR GIFTS TO GOD

The Stewardship Committee has been working on the Ministry Team Assignments for next year and we are considering some changes to make your experience on these teams more enjoyable. The main reason for having Ministry Teams has always been to provide a way for everyone in the congregation to participate in activities that support the worship service; such as helping with the fellowship coffee hour, ushering, and serving as a worship assistant. And this goal is not going to change because these team-building experiences strengthen the fellowship we feel for one another and for our church. But, we have heard back from a number of parishioners with suggestions for ways to address two issues that have hindered this experience;

1) the lack of people on each team with the experience to do certain technical chores, and 2) the view that it would be preferable to spread out people's participation over the course of the whole year rather than during one intense month.

The Stewardship Committee believes we have a plan for addressing these issues and, having received the endorsement of the church council, are suggesting a trial run of this new Ministry Team structure to begin in April of 2016. Basically our proposal would reorganize the Ministry Teams according to duties rather than months and would rotate participants on a quarterly rather than a monthly schedule. You will be hearing more about the details of this new plan in the weeks to come as we prepare for the congregational meeting in January where you will be given an opportunity to sign up for new team assignments. In the meantime, members of the Jan, Feb, and March 2016 Ministry Teams will be organized much like they were this year and will be contacted by a convener to set up team duty assignments. Thank you for your attention to this message and I welcome your feedback.

John Jefferson, Chairperson, Stewardship Committee.

NOTE: As of the newsletter printing, the number of 2016 Pledges received is 79. Our 2016 Stewardship goal is 80.

CONGREGATION PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"May he give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed."

Psalm 20:4

I realized during our church council meeting last evening that my time as Good Shepherd Congregational President is rapidly coming to a close. My, how the time has flown and how fantastic has been our work together!

I won't even try to list all of the things that have occurred during my 2 years on the council. But I do want to raise a few highlights. We mourned the loss of two wonderful Good Shepherds in Paul Hasvold and Joan Mau but celebrated the gain of two wonderful leaders in Pastor April and Pastor Amy. The search committee did such excellent work and I know we're all excited about the future we have together!

The Worship and Music Committee initiated weekly communion, Wednesday services, and fantastic musical offerings including the new Youth Handbell Choir. The final "installment" of our seasonal paraments, woven by GS member Barbara Berg will make its debut during the holiday season.

The Youth and Education Committee has held wonderful, engaging opportunities for our young members including intergenerational discussions, weekly Sunday School and summer Bible School opportunities, the Rwanda Insurance Project, as well as their upcoming Christmas program.

The Evangelism Committee has worked hard on helping new members join Good Shepherd, the Friends and Neighbors picnic, and new printed materials that will inform guests about GS. Our recent installment of new members is the largest in my memory and most gratifying!

The Property and Management Committee has been especially busy! Beautiful landscaping, painting the church, new cabinets, upgraded sound system, LED lighting (this significant project only cost the congregation \$217.75 due to rebates, grants, and generous donations....we'll save that much in electricity within months!), a lot of staff changes (please welcome back Jenny Werner as our Good Shepherd Assistant to the Pastor!), upgraded computer systems, and a new roof over the Fellowship Hall and Sunday School classrooms. (Please recall that a generous loan from an anonymous family is allowing us to fix our roofs without paying interest if we are able to pay it off quickly. I urge you to consider a tax write-off, end-of-the-year donation earmarked to pay down this debt. It would be great to make this disappear quickly!)

The Stewardship Committee is preparing a major overhaul of our ministry teams and the way they function each Sunday. Additionally, they have spearheaded a significant pledge campaign to provide the necessary funds to support our collective Good Shepherd mission.

Several "Ad Hoc" committees utilized donated funds to completely refurbish the furniture in the Pastor's office and the Narthex. New coffee makers were also added through these initiatives.

Good Shepherd will host the CNA nurse's training through NICC and plans to support one of the students. We have given extremely generous support to Nathan Wicks and Catherine Moeller. The Social Justice Committee has helped support many people needing legal assistance. The Art Committee has started logging our various artifacts and is helping to guide future acquisitions and their placement. WELCA remains very active in its support of Good Shepherd's mission.

I know I'm leaving out a lot, but to say that this is a congregation "on the move" would be a huge understatement! As the year winds down and we look forward to the holiday season I want you to be aware that the council is still very active: seeking nominations to fill the various positions for 2016 within the various committees, as well as the council. Additionally, we will be working diligently to prepare the 2016 budget for your consideration. We will have two opportunities for the congregation to learn about the proposed budget at Adult Forum on January 10th and 17th. Also, the Stewardship Committee will explain their new Ministry Team proposal at that time. The annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 24th, immediately following the 9:30 service. Following that meeting, my tenure on the Council will be completed. It has been quite a ride that has allowed me to express some of the desires of my heart for Good Shepherd. I am so grateful to all who have joined in these efforts as well as the strength from God above to accomplish them!

Respectfully,

James L. Fritz, President
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Congregation

COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE NEWS

This fall, the Subcommittee has met with Pastor Amy, been in several conversations with other committees and congregation members, and reviewed the assessment and recommendations of the Communications Audit completed by Luther students last spring. As a result, guidelines for sharing the good news of what's happening at Good Shepherd as well as providing information to our members about items of interest from area churches and organizations have been created. The guidelines will no doubt be refined as we expand and evaluate the variety of sources through which we receive and provide information. A brief summary follows:

Good Shepherd Directory – The online Directory is continually updated – photos and contact information for our new members are available there. Changes in phone numbers, email addresses, and residences are entered as soon as they are received in the church office. A new version of the paper Directory that will include all additions and updates since the first version was produced, is in the process of being compiled and printed. Announcements about its availability will be forthcoming.

Good Shepherd Letterhead Stationery and Note Cards – Our letterhead has been redesigned and printed on stationery-quality paper. The letterhead and note cards, both imprinted with our logo in green ink on ivory papers, are available in the church office. Contact our Administrative Assistant, Jenny, if you wish to use some of either.

Worship Bulletins and Announcement Sheets – Pastor Amy, the Worship & Music Committee, and Jenny have been collaborating to design and create bulletins that are effective and readable guides to our worship services and practices. The Order of Worship, various page number designations, and some Biblical texts are clearly noted.

Good news! – The bulletins are now posted on our website under the **CONNECT** tab. Available there now are bulletins and announcement sheets for Wednesday and Sunday services from September 30 to the present. Jane Kemp is to be thanked for getting this long-awaited website project underway.

The separate announcement sheets are intended to provide information about events related to that worship evening or day, Good Shepherd events for the week ahead, and timely area church and organization announcements. Area organization programs and events announcements usually will be limited to those involving congregation members.

Good Shepherd's Website (www.goodshepherdddecorah.org) – Several additions and upgrades have been made to our website in recent weeks. Added under the **CONNECT tab** are the texts of Pastor Amy's **sermons**, beginning with Sunday, October 18; **bulletins and announcement sheets** (described above); and **newsletters**, beginning with the October 2015 issue. The style and format of our newsletter is being reviewed, also.

TREASURER'S REPORT

GENERAL FUND

11/17/2015

Total Income from January 1st, 2015 to October 31st, 2015: \$164,052.98

Total Expenses from January 1st, 2015 to October 31st, 2015: \$163,933.87

Total income was higher than total expenses by: \$119.11

Total 2015 Budget was set at: \$203,972.00

Notes: 1) The cost of the new roof of \$25,422.00 was paid in October. This expense was included in the total expenses of \$189,355.87. This bill was paid with \$7,000.00 from the Undesignated Memorial Fund, \$1,000.00 from the Equipment Reserve Fund and \$17,422.00 from the General Fund. The loan of \$8,000.00 was received in early November and was used to replenish the General Fund which contained only \$4,956.03 at the end of October due to extraordinary expenditures including the new roof. (The General Fund is used to pay for ongoing operating expenses.) The loan money does not change the income and expense amounts as shown above for the first 10 months of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. A note payable for the \$8,000 loan will be shown in the November Good Shepherd Balance Sheet.

2) Contributions for September 2015 were \$14,997.48 and for October 2015 were \$14,608.79. These contribution amounts are low compared to the contributions for all other months in 2015, except for January and July.

(FYI: In comparison, contributions for September and October of 2014 were \$17,906.92 and \$13,335.18.)

3) Estimated October benevolences payable to the Synod and other organizations in the amount of \$3,058.00 have not yet been paid and will be sent out with the November and December benevolences in a quarterly payment.

4) The LED project report is shown in the minutes of the November Council meeting.

MISSION ASSISTANCE FUND REPORT

10/22/2015 Account Balance: \$973.12

11/24/2015 Account Balance: \$1136.12

Donations \$163.00

Note: Good Shepherd General Fund set a budget of \$300.00 for the Mission Assistance Fund. As of 11/24/2015, none of the budgeted \$300.00 had been spent.

Respectfully submitted,

Clara Knudson

EDUCATION

SUNDAY SCHOOL

CHRISTMAS STORYTELLING Sunday, December 6 at 10:45am Lise Kildegaard will share the Christmas story with Sunday School children before they prepare to share the story themselves in the Christmas program. Everyone is welcome for this special event.

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM will be Sunday, December 20 at 5pm. We will share a simple supper after the program. Those with last names A-M please bring a tray of cookies. Those with last names N-Z bring a tray of sandwiches. Sunday School children will be preparing for this the next 3 Sundays. Parents please let Krista Holland know if your child won't be able to be part of the program.

NO SUNDAY SCHOOL ON DECEMBER 27 OR JANUARY 3

CONFIRMATION

CONFIRMATION MENTORS We are in need of more confirmation mentors. You will be paired with one youth and asked to meet with that youth during Lenten Soup Suppers. You'll also be asked to let this youth know you care by reaching out after worship, during coffee hour and by showing an interest in this youth's life.

DECEMBER CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE

Dec. 2, 6:30pm- ConFest at Decorah Luther Church. Meet at Decorah Lutheran, let Pr. Amy know if you need a ride

Dec. 6- Christmas Storytelling with Lise Kildegaard, Christmas Program Practice

Dec. 13- Youth Sunday School/Confirmation class in Pr. Amy's office, decorate Christmas tree after class

Dec. 20- Christmas Program Practice

ADULT EDUCATION

ADVENT PRAYER CALENDAR The Adult Education Committee has produced an Advent Prayer Calendar. This calendar will help us pray through Advent with one "Word of the Day" and a scripture passage for each day of Advent. Use the Word to center your thoughts and open yourself to God's presence as you move through your day. Watch for where you see the Word at work in your day. The Word of the Day will also be posted on Facebook each day. If you use Facebook, please share your thoughts and pictures about where you see the Word at work in your life during Advent. Post them on our Good Shepherd Facebook page and they'll be shared with all who follow our page.

DECEMBER ADULT FORUMS:

December 6. **Chat with Pr. Amy for the January Ministry Team and our new members.** Come get to know Pastor Amy and your neighbors for conversation about what you appreciate about Good Shepherd and your hopes and dreams for our congregation. The January Ministry Team will sign up and new members will hear more about Ministry Teams.

December 13. **Prayer Practices for Advent and All Year.** Some fascinating assumptions underlie the simple practice of prayer as speaking to God and listening to God. We'll give special attention to the Good Shepherd Advent Prayer Calendar word for this day: patience. Professor Emeritus and Grace Institute Director Emeritus Brad Hanson will lead.

December 20. **Building Good Shepherd's Newest Ministry.** Based on the recommendation of the Social Justice Committee, our congregation has voted to take up a new ministry: sponsoring Certified Nurse Aide training for local residents. These classes will be taught at Good Shepherd by faculty of the Northeast Iowa Community College, with liaison work by our own Liza Hicken. How can this effort fit with your gifts and with our vision for our church? Come help build this as a Good Shepherd ministry.

WORSHIP

CHRISTMAS SEASON SERVICES

Thursday, December 24 at 4:30pm - Christmas Eve Worship with Holy Communion

Friday, December 25 at 9:30am - Christmas Day Worship with Holy Communion

Sunday, December 27 at 9:30am - Service of Lessons and Carols

Sunday, January 3 at 9:30am - Worship Service with Holy Communion, Rev. Richard Simon Hanson preaching and presiding.

ADVENT WREATH AND CANDLE LIGHTING

The wreath stand and candle holder were designed by Harley Refsal for the new sanctuary in 1988. This year's Advent Wreath was created by Altar Guild member Jeri Laursen and Elizabeth Kashins.

Lighting the candles this season will be:

11/29 - Gertz Family

12/2 - Keegan/ Joyce Family

12/6—Norris Family

12/9 - Nathan and Abby Larson

12/13 - Bellrichard/Hicken Family

12/16 - open to fill

12/20 - Cote Family

WEDNESDAY NIGHT WORSHIP DURING ADVENT

Wednesday nights in Advent we will be joining in a simple evening prayer service at 5:30 pm using beautiful Advent hymns. We will share in Holy Communion and continue using the Faith5 way of connecting with God, scripture and one other. We'll use the scripture and prayer word from the Advent prayer calendar. Supper at 6:15 will follow.

Members are bringing meals for each other so that we can share in a simple supper and faith conversation. If you can bring a simple meal (soup, chili, tacos, pizza) contact Jonathon Struve struvejo@luther.edu. Even if you can't attend Wednesday night, please consider supporting this important ministry by bringing a meal.

There will be no Wednesday night worship on Wednesdays, Dec. 23 and Dec. 30.

CHRISTMAS TREE AND TREE DECORATING PARTY

The tree in the sanctuary will help us move towards Christmas together as a congregation. The first Sunday in Advent, 11/29, there will be no tree. The second Sunday, 12/6, there will be an empty tree. The third Sunday, 12/13, there will be lights on the tree. The fourth Sunday, 12/20, there will be a tree with

lights and ornaments.

We will decorate the tree on Sunday, December 13 after Sunday School and Fellowship Hour. Please come join in and share in the joy of preparing our sanctuary to celebrate the birth of Christ!

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Mark your calendars for the Good Shepherd Christmas program on Sunday, December 20 at 5:00pm.

NEW ADVENT PARAMENTS

The new paraments have been created and woven by member and professional weaver, Barbara Berg. She shares the following about her inspiration: "The color blue is symbolic for "hope". The parament's paths through hills lead to Bethlehem. In Luke 3:5, Isaiah is quoted "and the crooked shall be made straight." Advent is a time of waiting and the journey is slow. We light candles each Sunday starting with just one and increasing each Sunday until four are burning. This effect shows in the sky above the hills going from dark blue to light blue. Bethlehem is the end of this journey. I have used a water element (pond) because we need water for our journey."

ALTAR GUILD WELCOMES CONTRIBUTIONS OF POINSETTIAS

Signs of the Christmas season will begin to appear in our sanctuary throughout Advent. In addition to our Advent Wreath, poinsettia plants gradually will be added to the altar area beginning on the Second Sunday, December 6. with a full display in place for our Christmas Eve and Day services. Contributions may be made in honor or memory of relatives and friends and delivered to the Narthex Table for placement by Altar Guild throughout the month. Contact Carol Hasvold or Elizabeth Kaschins if you have questions. Thanks from the Altar Guild.

HOLY COMMUNION AT THE ALTAR RAIL DURING ADVENT

During the seasons of Advent and Lent we will be sharing in Holy Communion at the altar rail each week. We will continue with the practice of intinction while at the rail.

COMMUNION BREAD

It has come to the attention of the Altar Guild that some of our members may have an allergy to eggs. Because of this, we wanted to publish the ingredients of the bread: eggs, olive oil, honey, molasses, water, salt, soda and Pamela's Gluten Free bread flour. If you are allergic to any of these ingredients please let Elizabeth Kaschins or Pastor Amy know. We have wafers available upon request.

Thank you to the following bread bakers: Charilyn Hover, Marie Freerking, Helen Schweizer, Elizabeth Kaschins, Jane Kemp, Glenda Wuest, Bev Sheridan, Carol Hasvold, Amalia

Ministry Schedule

Ministry Team Schedule

January 2015 Convener– John Jefferson

Team G (Partner Team I)

December Altar Guild

Marie Freerking

Ann Naslund

Amalia Vagts

Berg, Don (2)

Jensen, Julie (1)

Judisch, David (2)

Mikkelsen, Judy (1)

Reutlinger, David (2)

Sheridan, Bev (1)

Ylvisaker, Richard (2)

Cantor Schedule

Sundays:

12/6: Narveson

12/13: Barnaal

12/20: Raney

12/27: TBD

Radio Broadcast will be December 20

Please note: The broadcast of our services will be tape-delayed and will begin at approx. 11:00am, after the broadcast of the Luther Congregation service.

December Scriptures

2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	3 RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT	4 TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT	1st SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS
DECEMBER 6	DECEMBER 13	December 20	December 27
Malachi 3:1-4	Zephaniah 3:14-20	Micah 5:2-5a	1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26
Canticle: Luke 1:68-79	Canticle: Isaiah 12:2-6	Canticle: Luke 1:46b-55	Psalm 148
Philippians 1:3-11	Philippians 4:4-7	Hebrews 10:5-10	Colossians 3:12-17
Luke 3:1-6	Luke 3:7-18	Luke 1:39-45	Luke 2:41-52

GOOD SHEPHERD ANNOUNCEMENTS

DECORAH CHORALE CHRISTMAS BENEFIT CONCERT

The Decorah Chorale will present their 16th annual "Home for Christmas" benefit concert for the Winneshiek County Habitat for Humanity on Saturday, December 12, at 7:00 pm, at the Decorah Lutheran Church. A freewill offering will be accepted to benefit Habitat for Humanity.

WREATH DONATION

The evergreen wreath hanging on the west door has been donated by David and Gail Judisch in memory of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Delbert Haberkamp and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Judisch.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Good Shepherd Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet Wednesday, December 16 from 1-3:00 p.m. at the home of Jerrine Jacobsen. New knitters and crocheters are welcome at any time. Join us for a snack and great fellowship as we create shawls, lap robes, and blankets in this ministry. Please call Ruth Bruce at 419-7567 if you have questions or need directions to Jerrine's new home in the Freeport area.

HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT YOU'D LIKE US TO SHARE?

Send it to the Good Shepherd office by the Thursdays at 9am if you would like it included in the Sunday bulletin or by newsletter deadline noted here and on the church calendar. Announcements about area organizations that involve Good Shepherd members will be included on the Announcements Handout on Sunday mornings, as space allows, and in the Community Announcements section of the newsletter. Announcements about area churches and benefits will be included in the Community Announcements section as space allows.

VISITING OPPORTUNITIES

Here is a list of persons from our congregation who are residing in the Decorah care facilities. Keep in mind there may be occasional inaccuracies as people move in and out of care.

Wellington Place: Linda Lambert, Justine Lionberger, Jaerdis Nesheim, Carmen Sunde. Don Pilgrim is now living with his daughter, Mary, at 306 Day Street.

Aase Haugen: Richard & Millie Dinger, Flo Klosterboer, Diane Kvamme, Dorothy Magelssen, Paul Solberg, Maxine Swiggum.

Eastern Star Assisted Living: Naomi Craft #116, 911 Ridgewood Dr.

POSTAGE STAMPS

Please save your canceled postage stamps for Verne Koenig, he has a project he uses them for. There is collection box in the church office by the copier to drop them into. Thank you.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

January Newsletter Deadline is **December 17, 2015.**

Next Council meeting – Tuesday, December 15, 2015 7:00 pm

SOCIAL JUSTICE

CERTIFIED NURSE AIDE (CAN) TRAINING AT GOOD SHEPHERD CHURCH

Northeast Iowa Community College will offer a Certified Nurse Aide class to help meet the training requirements to become employed as a nurse aide in nursing facilities. Starting in early January, a Good Shepherd meeting space will be used for six of the classes, along with three laboratory days at Northeast Iowa Community College in Calmar. Students will then attend the clinical portion of the class at Aase Haugen long term care facility in Decorah. Nurse aide positions are in great demand and can lead to higher level positions in the health care field. . For more information contact Liza Hicken at NICC (5563.562.3263, ext 222 or [800.728.2256](tel:800.728.2256)) or hickene@nicc.edu before December 15, 2015. Half of our Christmas offerings will be used to provide scholarships for students in the class.

FIRST LUTHERAN FOOD PANTRY NEEDS VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRIBUTORS

First Lutheran's Food Pantry continues to see increasing need for food, funds and volunteers. Canned goods, cereals, and personal care items are in great demand. You can make a check to Good Shepherd with memo line saying "First Lutheran Food Pantry" also. Most importantly, you can help stock shelves or assist the clients weekday afternoons and Thursday evenings. Carolyn Flaskerude, coordinator, can be reached at First Lutheran (382-2638).

-Lyle Otte, Social Justice Committee member

COMMUNITY MEAL

The **DECORAH COMMUNITY MEALS** bring people together from all walks of life to share a meal together.

The meals are free to all and they occur on **the first & third Thursday evenings** each month from **5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at First Lutheran Church.**

Good Shepherd, along with First Lutheran, Northeast Iowa Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Ryumonji Zen Monastery, the United Methodist Church, and St. Benedict's Catholic Church are the faith groups that organize and coordinate the event. McCaffrey's Dolce Vita has provided the main entrée on the third Thursday of the month. Other faith groups and community organizations have brought salads and desserts and have volunteered. All members of Good Shepherd are welcome to come enjoy these free meals.

PATH TO CITIZENSHIP

Path to Citizenship is a northeast Iowa organization comprised of a coalition of various Decorah area faith groups. Its mission is to aid those people who require assistance with immigration issues, whether it be for personal or legal need. The steering committee for this organization is made up of representatives (as of May 2014) from Decorah Congregational UCC Church, First Lutheran Church of Decorah, First United Methodist Church of Decorah, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Decorah, Northeast Iowa Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, and Saint Benedict Catholic Parish of Decorah. The Northeast Iowa Peace and Justice Center, Inc., is also represented on this steering committee. As part of our mission we are supporting, through volunteerism and fund raising, a United Methodist Immigration Ministry known as Justice For Our Neighbors (JFON) which brings an immigration lawyer to Decorah once per quarter, and offers those legal services to clients at no charge.

If you wish to contribute, please write your checks to Good Shepherd Lutheran and write "Path to Citizenship" on the memo line.

CLINIC COORDINATOR NEEDED

The Decorah Community Free Clinic seeks a part-time clinic coordinator, roughly ten hours weekly including free clinic hours, Thursdays 4:30-9 PM. This is a paid position, RN or LPN preferred, with commitment to the Free Clinic mission. Contact freeclinic52101@gmail.com for more info, with cover letter and resume for application.

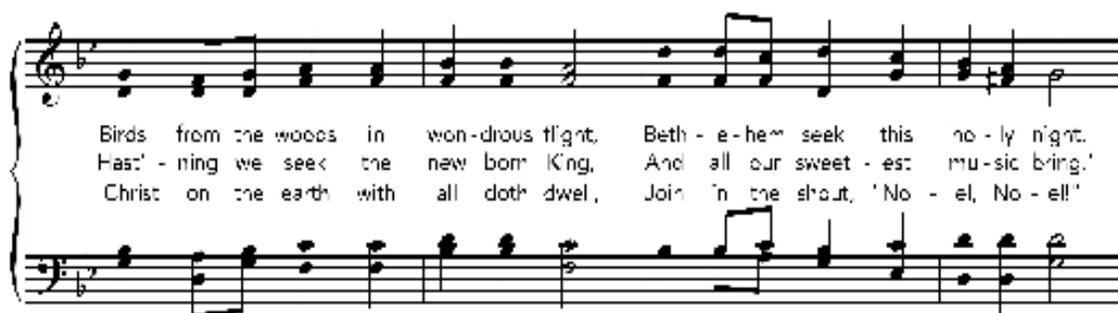
The Music Page

Christmas Eve, 2015

On Christmas Eve, the Good Shepherd choir will sing this lovely French carol, known as the "Carol of the Birds." Here is an arrangement you can play and sing in your home.



Whence comes this rush of wings a far fol- low- ing straight the No- el star?
 'Till us, ye birds, why come ye here, in to this sta- tion, poor and dear?
 An- gels and shep- herds, birds of the sky, Come where the Son of God doth lie;



Birds from the woods in won- drous flight, Beth- e- hem seek this no- ly night.
 Hast' - ning we seek the new born King, And all our sweet - est mu- sic bring.
 Christ on the earth with all doth dwell, Join in the shout, 'No - el, No - el!'



St. Francis preaching to the birds

December Music Schedule

🎵 Note Changes on 12/6 and 12/13 🎵

- 12/6: Youth Handbells
- 12/13: Band
- 12/20: Choir
- 12/24: Choir and Band
- 12/27: Pick-up Choir (all are welcome—come at 8:45 to learn "Good King Wenceslas")

Soli Deo Gloria!

ALTAR GUILD: Marie Freerking Ann Naslund Amalia Vagis		Ministry Team			MONTH of DECEMBER Convenor: Jane Kemp		CHRISTMAS SERVICES
WEDNESDAY 5:30 P.M. SERVICE	WEDNESDAY December 2 COMMUNION	WEDNESDAY December 9 COMMUNION	WEDNESDAY December 16 COMMUNION	SUNDAY Dec 20 – 5:00 pm CHRISTMAS PROGRAM	THURSDAY Christmas Eve December 24 – 4:30 pm COMMUNION		
ACOLYTE	Keegan Joyce	Nathan & Abby Larson					
READER/COMM. ASST.	Norma Refsal Harley Refsal	Norma Refsal Harley Refsal	Jim Fritz Jane Kemp	NO COMMUNION	Mike Blair Sue Blair		
USHERS/GREETERS	Norma Refsal Harley Refsal	Norma Refsal Harley Refsal	Jim Fritz Jane Kemp	NO USHERS	Reg Laurson Jeri Laurson		
SUNDAY 9:30 A.M. SERVICE	SUNDAY December 6 COMMUNION	SUNDAY December 13 COMMUNION	SUNDAY December 20 COMMUNION BROADCAST	SUNDAY December 27 COMMUNION	FRIDAY Christmas Day December 25– 9:30 am COMMUNION		
ACOLYTE	Maggie Norris	Lulu Bellrichard	Mason Coto	Maggie Norris			
READER/COMM. ASST. SECOND COMM. ASST.	Judy School Reg Laurson	Judy School Jeri Laurson	Sue Blair Jane Kemp	Jane Kemp Elizabeth Kaschins	Jane Kemp Elizabeth Kaschins		
USHERS/GREETERS (2-3)	Dick Wuest Ed & Joyce Epperly	Dick Wuest Ed & Joyce Epperly	Dick Wuest Reg & Jeri Laurson	Tim & Judy School Trudy Peterson	Harland Nelson Pam & Ray Torresdal		
NURSERY	Glendalu Wuest	Glendalu Wuest	Glendalu Wuest				
COFFEE SERVERS (2-3) *In Charge	*Jane BorelliGlenn Nelson Glendalu & Dick Wuest JoAnn & Jerry Auhwas	*Jane BorelliGlenn Nelson Glendalu & Dick Wuest JoAnn & Jerry Auhwas	*Glendalu /Dick Wuest Trudy Peterson Agnas Hfjella	Ed & Joyce Epperly Anna Norris Agnas Hfjella	No Coffee		
BROADCAST - Ushers remember to broadcast on December 20 (broadcasting 11 am)			Broadcast				
SPECIAL EVENT: Eastern Star Coffee Party, Saturday, Dec. 19, 2:00 pm - Arrive by 1:45 pm to set up (ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR, MAY SCHMIDT, 382-5787)							
VOLUNTEERS: Judy School (bars) Jane Jatkoubek (cookies)	ENTERTAINMENT: Mike and Sue Blair leading Christmas carols	NUMBER EXPECTED: 40-50 including staff					

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

BURR OAK LUTHERAN CHURCH WELCA ADVENT PROGRAM

Celebrate the Birth of Christ" on Saturday, December 5, at 9:30 am at a WELCA special Advent program which includes fellowship, good food and a chance to get in the right spirit of the true meaning of Christmas. All are welcome.

LIFESERVE BLOOD CENTER BLOOD DRIVE

At Winneshiak Medical Center, **Friday, December 11**, 10:30 am – 2:30 pm. Make an appointment by calling WMC Community Relations at [563-382-2911](tel:563-382-2911) or visit www.lifesevebloodcenter.org to schedule online.

COMMUNITY PIANO PROJECT

The GRAND PIANO PROJECT seeks to raise \$35,000 for a grand piano for community concerts in Decorah. The instruments will be located at and maintained by Decorah Lutheran Church where many of the concerts are held. A black key costs \$300 and a white key costs \$400. However, any size gift is appreciated and may be given to honor someone or as a memorial. Currently \$10,942 (one third of the goal) has been raised. Gifts should be sent to Decorah Lutheran Church, 309 Winnebago Street, Decorah, and earmarked GRAND PIANO PROJECT. Thank you for your support of this project.

WOMEN OF THE ELCA

Thank you to all for making our Soup Luncheon/Country Store a success again this year. This year we raised \$185.00 from the silent auction, \$431.00 from the soup luncheon and \$386.30 from the country store with more sales still being made. We will meet in January to distribute the funds raised from this project and our Nordic Fest krumkake project. Thank you to Gail Judisch and Heather Cote for co-chairing this event and to Norma Refsal and Gail for donating the silent auction items.

I hope you are enjoying your Gather bible study series for this year. **In December** – You will find an Advent devotional. **In the winter** – We will explore the book of Philippians "Christian Citizenship 101". With this format a variety of new writers can be used and opportunities can be created for new women to join the study group. For those who do not get the magazine, we will have a section in the communication cubbies labeled "Gather Magazine" by the church office and current subscribers can add their magazines when they are finished and someone else will be able to enjoy the magazine. This is a good opportunity to read the good articles and Bible study that are always included. It is also a way to share your Gather magazine with others in the congregation and community. Reuse, recycle, renew.

Now is also the time to plan your hostesses and bible study leaders for the new year. Please get your information in to the church secretary by January 1.

W/ELCA Upcoming events:

December 5 - W/ELCA Advent Program and Brunch-Burr Oak Lutheran, 9:30 am

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
A Reconciling In Christ Congregation
701 Iowa Ave.
Decorah, IA 52101

Change Service
Requested

Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 186
Decorah, IA 52101



December 2015 Newsletter